

[Interested?]

Correctional facilities and programs are part of the community and cannot exist in a vacuum. Through ongoing dialogue and consultation with the community, Citizens' Advisory Committees play a vital role in assisting the Correctional Service of Canada become more responsive to all Canadians.

The Correctional Service of Canada is committed to recruiting and supporting volunteers from all cultural and socio-economic segments of the community. The future of corrections will depend on the community's support and participation.

If you would like to become involved or would like more information about Citizens' Advisory Committees, please contact your nearest office/facility of the Correctional Service of Canada.

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[The Mission of the Citizens' Advisory Committees]

Citizens' Advisory Committees, through voluntary participation in the Canadian federal correctional process, contribute to the protection of society by actively interacting with staff of the Correctional Service of Canada, the public and offenders, providing impartial advice and recommendations, thereby contributing to the quality of the correctional process.

The values

- We believe that the protection of society must be the paramount consideration in the corrections process.
- We respect the dignity of individuals, the rights of all members of society, and the potential for human growth and development.
- We believe in the right of all citizens to become informed participants in the correctional process.
- We believe that offenders have the potential to live as law-abiding citizens.
- We believe that the community has a responsibility to facilitate the reintegration of the offender into society.
- We believe that the effective operation of all Citizens' Advisory Committees throughout Canada is essential in managing the Correctional Service of Canada with openness and integrity.

The goals

- To promote public knowledge and understanding of corrections through communication among CSC staff, the public and offenders;
- To contribute to the overall development of correctional facilities and programs;
- To foster public participation in the correctional process;
- To participate in developing community resources designed to support correctional programs;
- To act as independent observers.

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Citizens'

Advisory

Committees

to the

Correctional

Service

of Canada



[Citizens' Advisory Committees]

Communities and their citizens have an important role to play in the Canadian criminal justice system.

As part of the correctional process, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) is the federal agency responsible for the administration of the sentences, the management of correctional facilities and the supervision of offenders serving terms of two years or more. Over the years, interaction between the Correctional Service and concerned members of the community has evolved into an organized means for community involvement in the correctional system — **Citizens' Advisory Committees**.

Since their initial inception in 1965, and subsequent formal recognition through the Parliamentary Sub-Committee Report on Federal Penitentiaries (1977), these committees have helped to inform communities about the correctional process and to contribute to the overall development of correctional facilities and programs. Over 500 citizens are now active in its ranks, with currently more than 50 Citizens' Advisory Committees (CACs) across Canada.

“No penitentiary service can succeed without understanding and participation by the public. Prisons belong to the public and therefore the people who pay for them have a vested interest in their remaining peaceful and in serving their best interests.”

Report to Parliament, by the Sub-Committee on the Penitentiary System in Canada, MacGowan Report, 1977

[Community Participation]

With a keen interest in positively contributing to the correctional process, Citizens' Advisory Committees provide a vehicle for the community to represent and express itself in the core work of the Correctional Service of Canada.

Through the voluntary participation in the Canadian correctional process, which is guided by their Mission and Values, Citizens' Advisory Committees provide:

- **Advice** - Through open discussion with the Correctional Service of Canada, provide the vital function of consultation and advice, which contributes to the operation and development of the Correctional Service, its programs and policies.
- **Independent Observers** - Act as independent observers of the day-to-day activities and operations of the Correctional Service of Canada.
- **Liaison** - Serve as a communication link with the community, by actively interacting with staff of the Correctional Service of Canada, the public and offenders.

“To ensure citizens are consulted in the development and implementation of policies and programs relating to offenders, and to promote and maintain positive relationships between operational units and local communities through the establishment of Citizens' Advisory Committees.”

The Correctional Service of Canada's Commissioner's Directive on Citizens' Advisory Committees, No. 027, 1990-11-23

[Membership]

Citizens' Advisory Committees should reflect, as much as possible, the ethnic, socio-economic and cultural interests of the local community.

Members are appointed for a period of not less than two years. Appointments are made by the Deputy Commissioner of the region based on recommendations from the Correctional Service Director, Warden or Parole manager and in consultation with the specific Citizens' Advisory Committee involved.

[Accomplishments]

While established to promote an honest, open dialogue among all parties, Citizens' Advisory Committees do much more:

- they help give a clearer perception and better resolution of community concerns;
- they help encourage the community to make available educational, cultural and employment resources;
- they help propose, implement and support effective correctional programs;
- they help bring offenders and the community closer together (i.e., through meetings and useful projects for disadvantaged).

“We believe that respecting the right of all concerned individuals to be informed participants in the correctional process contributes to the quality of the process and of the decisions made.”

Mission of the Correctional Service of Canada, 1988